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ABSTRACT

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) is a preventive drug education program intended to stop drug use before it begins. Its purpose is to help children say "no" to drug, alcohol, and tobacco use by teaching them techniques to resist peer pressure. The newest addition to the concept is the DARE Parent Program (DPP), created to stimulate interest in the community and motivate families to take an active role in the prevention of substance abuse. DPP is conducted as a series of separate meetings for parents to brief them on the objectives of the core curriculum and to teach them how to recognize the signs of drug use, use local program resources, and improve family communication. The purpose of this manual is to help communities with established DARE programs expand into parent education. Individual sections focus on the background of the program, the goals and objectives of the parent program, critical elements of the DARE Parent Program, implementation guidelines, program experiences in the DARE parent sessions, and program evaluation. Lists of DARE regional training centers and state administrative agencies are appended as is information on obtaining films. (Contains 27 references.) (NB)

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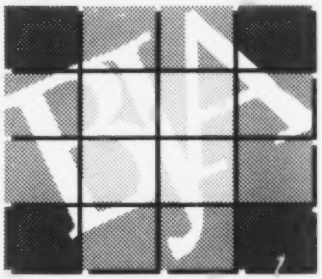

Bureau of Justice Assistance

An Introduction to the National DARE Parent Program

PROGRAM BRIEF

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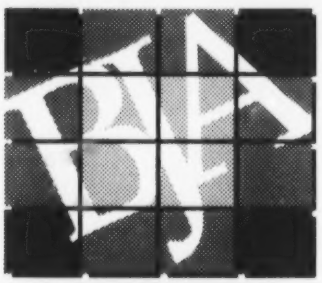

Bureau of Justice Assistance

An Introduction to the National DARE Parent Program

PROGRAM BRIEF

June 1993

NCJ 142422

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Bureau of Justice Assistance
633 Indiana Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20531
202–514–6278

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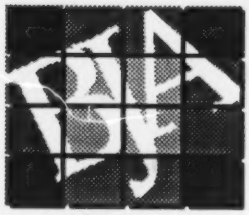

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INTRODUCTION

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) is a preventive drug education program intended to stop drug use before it begins. Its purpose is to help kids say "no" to drug, alcohol, and tobacco use by teaching them techniques to resist peer pressure.

DARE places special emphasis on reaching children by the last year of elementary school. The student, or "core," version of the program gives youngsters the facts about the effects of drugs and other harmful substances and provides the necessary skills and motivation to help them avoid being swept into drug use as they graduate to junior and senior high school.

DARE instructors are carefully selected, thoroughly trained, uniformed law enforcement officers. DARE officers are assigned up to five schools per semester, and officers visit each assigned school at least 1 day a week to present an innovative curriculum that emphasizes self-esteem, taking responsibility for one's own behavior, and saying "no" to drug experimentation. DARE officers conduct assembly programs and followup visits to individual classrooms and hold formal training sessions for teachers on drug use.

A side benefit of the DARE program is that it offers students a chance to gain a dependable, trustworthy adult friend, develop a positive attitude toward law enforcement personnel, and learn greater respect for the law.

The newest addition to the concept is the DARE Parent Program (DPP), which is the subject of this publication. DPP was created to stimulate interest in the community and motivate families to take an active role in the prevention of substance abuse. The content of this program is designed to reinforce concepts taught in the DARE core curriculum. DPP is conducted as a series of separate meetings for parents to brief them on the objectives of the core curriculum and to teach them how to recognize the signs of drug use, use local program resources, and improve family communication.

The purpose of this manual is to help communities with established DARE programs expand into parent education. This publication is designed for community and education policymakers and other individuals with organizational authority—in churches and recreation centers, for example—who might be interested in substance abuse–prevention programs aimed at parents and families.

A wide variety of groups—DARE officers; school personnel; and civic, public, and private organizations—can use this publication as a preliminary guide or a decisionmaking tool in organizing the adult community to take a leadership role in the fight against substance abuse and youthful experimentation. Readers are cautioned, however, that only certified DARE officers may receive the training to conduct the DARE Parent Program.

Under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), Federal funds are available to the States under BJA's Formula Grant Program to institute prevention programs. These funds are managed by an agency designated by the Governor in each State and can be used for local DARE programs. Interested communities should contact their designated State agency, the address and phone number for which can be found in appendix 2.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Drug Abuse Assistance Education Program began as a joint program of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles Unified School District. This cooperative effort was guided by research findings indicating that prevention programs that focused on self-management skills (that is, decisionmaking, values clarification, and problem solving), positive lifestyles, and alternatives to drug use appeared to be successful. The DARE curriculum was designed and first presented to fifth- and sixth-grade students in Los Angeles in 1983.

Interest in DARE grew rapidly. By July 1986, 48 police departments had sent personnel to Los Angeles for training. In response to this interest and to early evaluations of the program, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), in cooperation with LAPD, embarked on an effort to document the DARE program through a demonstration project. Three State and four local projects were funded to plan and organize drug resistance education programs for implementation in the 1987–88 school year. This effort resulted in a model DARE program that could be replicated nationwide.

By September 1987, 398 police departments in 33 States had sent personnel to LAPD for training. Eventually the demand on LAPD resources became overwhelming, and BJA—with congressional authority to provide funds to enhance drug control and prevention efforts at the State and local levels—was asked to consider supporting regional training centers (RTC's) to train officers in the DARE program.

In 1987 DARE America was formed as a national nonprofit corporation to wage war against drugs by:

- Creating nationwide awareness of the DARE program.
- Coordinating a nationwide DARE fundraising campaign to supply schools with educational print materials, films, notebooks, and other teaching aids.
- Promoting training through DARE regional training centers.
- Monitoring the program to maintain standards and integrity.

By June 1989 five DARE RTC's had received support through BJA discretionary funding and were operational. These centers became responsible for providing:

- An initial 80-hour DARE training course for law enforcement officers to teach the curriculum in elementary schools.
- An additional 40-hour DARE mentor training course for certified DARE officers, which further certifies them to train other officers as instructors and mentors.
- Inservice training sessions of 24 to 40 hours to inform DARE officers, law enforcement administrators, and education personnel about the most recent drug information, materials, and evaluation results.
- Accreditation of individual DARE State training centers.
- Technical assistance and periodic monitoring of each State's program to ensure adherence to the national policies and procedures for maintaining program integrity and curriculum standards.

The DARE National Training Center Policy Advisory Board has defined geographic boundaries for each RTC to ensure accountability in the delivery of training and provide an effective means of monitoring DARE's progress. The five RTC addresses, telephone numbers, and their jurisdictions are listed in appendix 1.

Today more than 14,100 law enforcement officers worldwide have been trained to teach DARE. The program has expanded to include students from kindergarten through high school. Since 1988, student workbooks have been printed and translated into Japanese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Braille.

Within the United States, more than 5 million students received DARE training in the 1991–92 school year.

BJA expects another 6 million students to receive DARE training in the 1992–93 school year. In Europe, Department of Defense law enforcement officers, also trained by the DARE RTC's, are teaching the DARE curriculum to the children of military families.

Soon after the DARE curriculum was introduced to fifth- and sixth-grade students, school administrators and adults associated with the program saw a need to involve families and communities in the prevention effort. Formal research supports the contention that families and communities have the greatest effect on childrearing practices, attitudes, values, and behaviors, which in turn influence whether children will abuse drugs. The Illinois State Police, in cooperation with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, designed the DARE Parent Program for families and other interested adults to enhance parental understanding of substance abuse and to help parents develop the skills they need to reduce the risk of their children being pressured into experimenting with dangerous and illegal substances.

PARENT PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall, long-term goals of the DARE Parent Program are to:

- Strengthen the basic elements taught to students in the DARE program by involving parents.
- Enhance and develop awareness among parents of drug trends in the community.
- Help families acquire the information and skills they need to reduce the risk of substance abuse among their children.

The short-term, immediate objectives of DPP are to help families:

- Practice communication and listening skills and identify self-esteem building techniques.
- Recognize the scope of the drug problem and the risk factors associated with drug use among young people.
- Discuss community and cultural attitudes about the use of alcohol and other drugs in general and identify the consequences involved in using them.
- Understand the stages of adolescent chemical dependency and obtain basic information about drugs.
- Evaluate the impact of peer and media pressure to use drugs and identify effective resistance skills.
- Identify community resources and referrals, recognize risk factors that may be addressed in the home, and become aware of how the overall drug picture relates to their communities.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE DARE PARENT PROGRAM

To launch a DPP program, the following critical elements must be incorporated into the preparation process.

Element 1: Trained Officers

Training for DPP is provided through the DARE regional training centers. Fees for training are minimal at most sites. Travel, lodging, and meal costs may be paid by schools, law enforcement agencies, or in some communities, program sponsors.

To be eligible for DPP training, candidates must be certified DARE officers who have completed the 36-hour training program through an RTC and taught at least two semesters of the core curriculum to students. All DPP sessions are conducted by mentor officers who serve as trainers. In the process of this instruction, trainees learn to incorporate the critical elements of DPP into four or five self-contained sessions. Thus, training is designed to equip officers with the skills to plan, promote, and effectively implement the program. Officers are provided with a DPP manual that includes a program overview, administrative suggestions, a curriculum for five Parent Program sessions, and supplementary materials. For user-friendly application by DARE officers, the format of the DPP manual is similar to the DARE core curriculum manual.

Upon completion of the DPP training, officers are able to:

- Motivate families to take an active role in the prevention of substance abuse.
- Teach and facilitate by introducing and summarizing sessions, using audiovisuals to enhance a presentation, modeling good communication skills, and providing useful feedback.
- Discuss adolescent risk factors and the level of drug abuse and explain how to strengthen family bonds, develop good communication skills, and take a position on drugs.
- Organize DPP programs by recruiting participants, working with the media, and planning sessions.

To meet these objectives, the officer training model includes practical exercises in facilitating and modeling session materials, logistical techniques to successfully implement DPP, and a summary evaluation and culmination of training.

Element 2: Program Planning

Planning and organization are essential for the DARE Parent Program to be a success. DPP can be provided in a variety of locations, but it is most commonly provided at a school during the evening. If a school or organization wishes to offer a parent program, the following procedures serve as a guideline:

- Meet with representatives of the local law enforcement agency to discuss DPP and determine whether the agency has qualified officers available.
- Begin preplanning activities at least 2 months prior to the proposed starting date. This planning must include:
  - ☐ Contacting school administrators.
  - ☐ Selecting dates, times, and places.
  - ☐ Developing a plan for publicity.
  - ☐ Writing public service announcements and press releases.
  - ☐ Securing assistance from local organizations, if necessary.
  - ☐ Arranging for child care.
  - ☐ Developing community resource lists.
  - ☐ Selecting and contacting panelists for the fourth session.

Element 3: Cosponsorship

The program can be enhanced by seeking sponsorship from respected community groups and organizations. Because this program is a joint venture between law enforcement and education, local Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA's) may be the most appropriate sponsors. Sponsors may assist in providing a site, financial support, logistics, or advertising.

Local business clubs and organizations are often very supportive in sponsoring DARE-related activities. However, only appropriate organizations, companies, or clubs should be contacted for sponsorship. The program should not be sponsored, for example, by bar establishments or by liquor and cigarette vendors and distributors.

Element 4: Site, Time, and Date Selection

Care should be exercised in selecting a program site. It should be accessible to handicapped persons and have adequate parking. The site must have enough meeting room space to accommodate the expected turnout.

The 2-hour sessions should be scheduled at a time when people are most likely to attend—for example, on Tuesday or Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Avoid scheduling sessions on the same date as other school or community events.

Element 5: Publicity

Begin publicizing the program at least 6 weeks before the first session. Sponsorship by a local television station can generate public service announcements, giving the time and location of the program.

- Prepare press releases for local media.
  - ☐ Contact local newspapers that may carry a feature story on the program.
  - ☐ Invite reporters to attend the first or even all the sessions.
  - ☐ Place an article in the family life section of the newspaper.
- Place messages in bulletins, newsletters, and other local publications.
- Reach parents and guardians directly through mailings, phone calls, brochures, and/or fliers sent home with students. Prepare a preregistration form for inclusion.
- Ask various community groups to generate interest by allowing a DPP representative to present a brief overview of the program at their next meeting.

Element 6: Child Care

Offering child care services may make the difference between a good turnout and a poor one.

- On the preregistration form (discussed on page 7), provide a section for participants to indicate child care needs.
- Check with the school administration to ascertain any insurance or liability concerns.
- Arrange for appropriate supervision.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The DPP curriculum is generally supplied either free of charge or for a nominal fee through the RTC providing the training. As indicated previously, access to the curriculum is restricted to officers certified to teach DPP and cannot be revised or changed without written permission from the RTC. This point is essential to proper implementation of the program.

Successful implementation of the program depends on two prerequisites:

1. Commitment of the school, sponsoring organization, and community. If the sponsor(s) of DPP are not committed to an all-out effort to reduce the demand for drugs, or if the community or members of the sponsoring organization have reservations about the program, the effort is unlikely to be successful. Care must be exercised to obtain the enthusiastic support of these entities.

2. Leadership by law enforcement. Because the primary vehicle for the program is law enforcement, it is important that local law enforcement be willing to play a leadership role in "selling" the program concept to other community leaders—individuals, corporate executives, and government officials—who in turn will generate support for a parent program. The following steps will ensure practical implementation of the program:

Step 1. Delegate preplanning activities. (See Program Planning on page 5.)

Step 2. Obtain sponsors/cosponsors.

Step 3. Select time, site, and date. DPP can be taught in a variety of settings. Although most commonly offered in schools in the evening, DPP has also been hosted by park districts, churches, and community centers. Every effort is made to ensure that the class site and schedule are convenient for the public.

Step 4. Prepare the publicity campaign. Publicity includes press releases, fliers, and mailings; making presentations to groups; and enlisting the help of local radio stations. (See also Publicity on page 6.)

Step 5. Arrange for child care services.

Step 6. Begin registration and preregistration activities. Because of limited class size, preregistration should be requested when mailings and notices are sent out. Preregistration also will allow for planning logistical needs—that is, setting, space, child care, refreshments, handicap requirements, materials, and equipment counts.

- If possible, have participants complete preregistration forms ahead of time, giving names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Prepare a list of reminders, announcements, and evaluation sheets for participants.
- Provide a sign-in sheet for each session for attendance records.
- Furnish name tags to allow participants to get to know one another and for you to know them by name.

Step 7. Ensure the availability of all program materials. For example, two videos are available for use with DPP. These videos can be purchased by schools, law enforcement agencies, or private sponsors. The films can be purchased from the sources listed in appendix 3. To reduce costs, films may be shared among communities or borrowed from a local film library.

To reproduce handouts provided in the DPP curriculum, DARE officers use photocopy machines at their agency or school. In addition, overhead masters are provided, and officers may use the masters to make a set of transparencies through their department or school district. Finally, additional costs may be incurred for drug information pamphlets, refreshments, and certificates of completion. These items supplement the DARE Parent Program, and funding for them may be obtained through the department, school district, or sponsor.

Program Experiences in the DARE Parent Sessions

The Dare Parent Program is intended primarily for families of children who are currently in the DARE program, but it is also aimed at parents of preschool children and other interested adults. The focus is on developing better skills to interact with children, understanding the pressures on children to use drugs, and reducing the risk of potential substance abuse.

DPP is analogous to the core curriculum, with its emphasis on risk factors and communication. Lesson and discussion topics for parents are condensed into four to five 2-hour sessions, which are generally held in the evening. Parent participants are encouraged to attend every session so that they fully understand the program and receive maximum benefit.

The following concepts are fundamental to the success of DPP:

- Self-esteem: How parents' self-esteem (or lack thereof) affects their children's self-image.
- Listening and communication: How parents listen to and talk with their children makes a big difference.
- Risk factors: Parent-related, as well as child-specific, risk factors can lead to later substance abuse.
- Peer pressure: Social pressure is analogous to peer pressure in the temptation to satisfy needs by experimenting with dangerous and illegal substances.
- Media messages: How to counteract subtle and overt media messages to use drugs and alcohol.
- Resistance skills: How to reinforce the resistance skills the DARE program teaches children.
- Drug information: Identifying various substances and their effects.
- Reasons for drug use: Common justifications given for substance abuse.
- Stages of adolescent chemical dependency: How to recognize the emotional and physical signs of substance abuse.
- Community resources and referrals: Where to go to get help.

Because DPP is taught by a certified DARE officer with at least two semesters' experience in teaching the DARE core curriculum to students, the officer's knowledge of community issues relating to children is greatly enhanced, and this experience further improves the officer's communication and public speaking skills. After initial presentations to the community about the DARE program, community members frequently request additional presentations by the DARE officer. DPP was designed to respond to the demand for further information and at the same time reinforce the concepts taught in the core DARE program.

The specific content of each session is summarized below.

Session 1: Effective Communication

Self-esteem and skills in listening and communicating are critical to adult-child communication. Practicing these skills helps develop stronger family communications essential to substance abuse prevention. This session covers:

- How self-esteem influences an individual's decision to use or not to use drugs and how to enhance good feelings about oneself. How parents' self-esteem frequently is reflected in their children.
- How specific listening and speaking skills can enhance parent-child communication.
- How unintentional messages can interfere with communication.

Session 1 is the foundation for future sessions, and concepts taught in this hour are referred to throughout the rest of the program.

Sessions 2a and 2b: Drug Abuse Prevention and Intervention

Session 2a: Birth to Age 8—Parents are taught to recognize how early exposure influences later drug abuse so that they themselves will establish personal standards of behavior with a view to reducing risks for their young children later in life. This session covers:

- Strategies for guarding against the five types of early exposure to substances: prescriptive, fetal, accidental, traditional (such as champagne toasts at festive occasions), and adult curiosity.
- Strategies for reducing the influence of the seven risk factors that may predispose young children toward drug abuse: family history of alcoholism, family history of criminality or antisocial behavior, family management problems, early antisocial behavior, family drug use or positive attitude toward use, academic failure, and lack of commitment to school.

Session 2b: Age 9 Through Adolescence—If parents know about both the immediate and long-term effects of drugs on adolescent children and recognize the risk factors for drug abuse, they are more likely to make educated observations of and establish reasonable standards for adolescent behavior. This session covers:

- The effects adolescent dependency has on the child, family, and community.
- Strategies for eliminating the risk factors for adolescent drug abuse.

Both sessions 2a and 2b are available to participants. Depending upon the needs of the individual class, only one of the two sessions may be scheduled.

Session 3: Examining Youth Pressures and Developing Resistance Skills

The family network is strengthened when life skills are understood, particularly those dealing with peer pressure and media influences. This session covers:

- Major sources of pressure young people experience.
- How pressure from the media and peer groups influences drug abuse.
- A video presentation on six of the major themes found in music: drug and alcohol use, suicide, violence, sexual exploitation, occult themes, and racism and bigotry. The presentation is followed by a discussion of guidelines for viewing TV, movies, and videos.
- Resistance skills to combat the major sources of pressure.

Session 4: Panel Discussion

Local community members from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines discuss the scope of substance abuse and suggest resources and referrals. Panel members represent a cross-section of the community, including students, educators, counselors, therapists, prevention professionals, and other local leaders.

- Panelists are asked to give a 5-minute overview of their agency and their interest in the program. To focus the discussion, panelists are given questions from the audience before the session begins.
- Following the introductory statements, panelists field questions from program participants.

EVALUATING THE PROGRAM: PROCESS AND FEEDBACK

DPP has been implemented in rural, suburban, and metropolitan locations and has been conducted by local, county, and State DARE officers. Officers have taught the program by themselves, with guest speakers, and as part of a team. All of the sessions provide participants with a forum in which to develop or improve existing prevention skills. In addition, participants are given an opportunity to become more involved in prevention activities by giving them access to community resources.

To generate and capitalize on parents' interest, participants should be asked to evaluate both the content and delivery of the program after each session. Upon completion of all the sessions, a final evaluation of the program is written by the officer. Copies of the officer's report and participants' evaluations are sent to the jurisdictional RTC. These evaluations are used to modify the curriculum and expand areas of particular interest to families.

To date, both officers and participants have been extremely positive about the program. Participants have expressed increased interest in becoming involved with prevention efforts as a result of the program. At several sites parents have demonstrated their commitment by forming parent support groups for activities similar to DARE, and the number of requests for DPP has increased substantially.

Results of Previous Pilot Tests

The Illinois DPP was piloted at 30 sites throughout the State during the 1990 spring semester. Approximately 500 adults participated. Several activities were used to evaluate the program's effectiveness: evaluations of individual sessions by parent participants and DARE instructors, debriefing sessions with DARE instructors, and analysis of the completed data.

During the same period, the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation completed work on a DARE Parent Program of its own. This program was piloted at 8 sites, with approximately 135 adults participating. To determine the effectiveness of the program, North Carolina had parent participants complete an evaluation and DARE instructors participate in a debriefing meeting at the conclusion of the sessions.

The evaluations of both program pilots independently documented the need to continue with DPP. After comparing both programs and the results of the evaluations, BJA and the National Training Center Policy Advisory Board asked the two agencies to work together to create one national DARE Parent Program. This was done in the fall of 1991, and the combined parent program was piloted by both agencies in the spring of 1992. The current DPP is the result, therefore, of many adults, parents, teachers, school administrators, and police officers who gave their time, ideas, and encouragement to support continuing efforts to guide children toward a drug-free society.

APPENDIX 1
DARE REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

Eastern DARE Regional Training Center

Virginia State Police Department
7700 Midlothian Turnpike
Richmond, VA 23235
Telephone: (804) 674–2238
Fax: (703) 387–5527

Jurisdictions: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia.

Midwest DARE Regional Training Center

Illinois State Police Academy
DARE Bureau
3700 East Lake Shore Drive
Springfield, IL 62707
Telephone: (217) 786–7057
Fax: (217) 786–6624

Jurisdictions: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Virgin Islands, and Wisconsin.

Southeast DARE Regional Training Center

North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation
3320 Old Garner Road
Raleigh, NC 27626
Telephone: (919) 662–4500
Fax: (919) 662–4521

Jurisdictions: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Southwest DARE Regional Training Center

Arizona Department of Public Safety
3110 19th Avenue, Suite 290
Phoenix, AZ 85015
Telephone: (602) 223–2544
Fax: (602) 279–0853

Jurisdictions: Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Utah.

Western DARE Regional Training Center

City of Los Angeles Police Department
DARE Division
150 Los Angeles Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Telephone: (213) 485–3277
Fax: (213) 485–8125

Jurisdictions: California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

APPENDIX 2
STATE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

The following State offices administer the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program.

Alabama

Leonard M. Gavin, Jr.
Division Chief
Law Enforcement/Highway Traffic Safety Division
Department of Economic and Community Affairs
401 Adams Avenue
P.O. Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103–5690

Contact: Douglas Miller

Phone: (205) 242–5900

Fax: (205) 242–5515

Alaska

Colonel John Murphy
Director
Alaska State Troopers
5700 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99507

Contact: Catherine Katsel

Phone: (907) 269–5082

Fax: (907) 337–2059

Arizona

Rex M. Holgerson
Executive Director
Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
1501 West Washington Street, Suite 207
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Contact: Joseph R. Farmer

Phone: (602) 542–1928

Fax: (602) 542–4852

Arkansas

Jerry Duran
Administrator
Office of Intergovernmental Services
Department of Finance and Administration
1515 Building, Suite 417
P.O. Box 3278
Little Rock, AR 72203

Contact: Gordon Burton

Phone: (501) 682–1074

Fax: (501) 682–5206

California

Ray Johnson
Executive Director
Office of Criminal Justice Planning
1130 K Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Contact: Judy O'Neal

Phone: (916) 323–5350

Fax: (916) 324–9167

Colorado

Bill Woodward
Director
Division of Criminal Justice
700 Kipling Street, Third Floor
Denver, CO 80215

Contact: John Inmann

Phone: (303) 239–4442

Fax: (303) 239–4491

Connecticut

Susan Shimelman
Under Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
Policy Planning Division
80 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Contact: Thomas A. Siconolfi

Phone: (203) 566–3500

Fax: (203) 566–1589

Delaware

Thomas J. Quinn
Executive Director
Criminal Justice Council
Carvel State Office Building
820 North French Street, Fourth Floor
Wilmington, DE 19801

Contact: Tricia Peraino

Phone: (302) 577–3466

Fax: (302) 577–3440

Florida

John A. Lenaerts
Chief
Bureau of Community Assistance
Rhyne Building
2740 Centerview Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Contact: Clayton Wilder

Phone: (904) 488–8016

Fax: (904) 487–4414

Georgia

Terry Norris
Director
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
503 Oak Place, Suite 540
Atlanta, GA 30349

Contact: Terry Norris

Phone: (404) 559–4949

Fax: (404) 559–4960

Hawaii

The Honorable Warren Price III
Attorney General
State of Hawaii
425 Queen Street, Room 221
Honolulu, HI 96813

Contact: Lari Koga
Resource Coordination Division

Phone: (808) 586–1151

Fax: (808) 586–1373

Idaho

Richard L. Cade
Director
Idaho Department of Law Enforcement
6111 Clinton Street
Boise, ID 83704

Contact: Cheri Elms

Phone: (208) 327–7170

Fax: (208) 327–7176

Illinois

Dennis E. Nowicki
Executive Director
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016
Chicago, IL 60606

Contact: Candice M. Kane

Phone: (312) 793–8550

Fax: (312) 793–8422

Indiana

Catherine O'Connor
Executive Director
Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
302 West Washington Street, Room E–209
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Contact: Doug Fowler

Phone: (317) 232–2561

Fax: (317) 232–4979

Iowa

Mike Forrest
Coordinator
Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50309

Contact: Martha Crist

Phone: (515) 281–4518

Fax: (515) 242–6390

Kansas

Susan M. Seltsam
Secretary of Administration
Department of Administration
State Capitol, Room 265–E
Topeka, KS 66612–1590

Contact: Brent Bengtson
Director
Office of Drug Abuse Programs
112 Landon Street Office Building
900 Jackson
Topeka, KS 66612–1214

Phone: (913) 296–2584

Fax: (913) 296–0043

Kentucky

Billy G. Wellman
Secretary
Justice Cabinet
Bush Building
403 Wapping Street, Second Floor
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Contact: Debra McGovern

Phone: (502) 564–7554

Fax: (502) 564–4840

Louisiana

Michael Ranatza
Executive Director
Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement
1885 Wooddale Boulevard, Suite 708
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Contact: Judy Mouton

Phone: (504) 925–3513

Fax: (504) 925–1998

Maine

John Atwood
Commissioner
Department of Public Safety
State House Station 42
Augusta, ME 04333

Contact: David Giampetruzzi
Maine Justice Assistance Council
93 Silver Street
Waterville, ME 04901

Phone: (207) 873–4687

Fax: (207) 877–0467

Maryland

Floyd O. Pond
Executive Director
Governor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission
300 East Joppa Road, Suite 1105
Towson, MD 21286

Contact: Greg Leyko

Phone: (410) 321–3521

Fax: (410) 321–3116

Massachusetts

Dennis A. Humphrey
Executive Director
Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice
100 Cambridge Street, Room 2100
Boston, MA 02202

Contact: Susan Foster

Phone: (617) 727–6300

Fax: (617) 727–5356

Michigan

Robert E. Peterson
Director
Office of Drug Control Policy
Michigan National Tower
124 West Allegan, Suite 1200
P.O. Box 30026
Lansing, MI 48909

Contact: Ardith DaFoe

Phone: (517) 373–2952

Fax: (517) 373–2963

Minnesota

Kevin Burns
Director
Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention
Department of Public Safety
316 Transportation Building
John Ireland Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55155

Contact: Billy Collins

Phone: (612) 297–7311

Fax: (612) 297–7313 (ODP)

Mississippi

Donald O'Cain
Director
Division of Public Safety Planning
Department of Public Safety
301 West Pearl Street
Jackson, MS 39203

Contact: Herbert Terry

Phone: (601) 949–2225

Fax: (601) 960–4263

Missouri

Terry L. Knowles
Director
Missouri Department of Public Safety
Truman State Office Building, Room 870
P.O. Box 749
Jefferson City, MO 65102–0749

Contact: Kenneth Higgins

Phone: (314) 751–4905

Fax: (314) 634–2808

Montana

Ed Hall
Administrator
Montana Board of Crime Control
303 North Roberts
Scott Hart Building
Helena, MT 59620

Contact: Ed Hall

Phone: (406) 444–3604

Fax: (406) 444–4722

Nebraska

Jean A. Lovell
Executive Director
Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 94946
Lincoln, NE 68509

Contact: Nancy Steeves

Phone: (402) 471–3416

Fax: (402) 471–2837

Nevada

James P. Weller
Director
Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety
555 Wright Way
Carson City, NV 89711–0900

Contact: Mary Lynn Evans
Office of Narcotics Control Assistance

Phone: (702) 687–5282

Fax: (702) 687–6798

New Hampshire

Mark C. Thompson
Director of Administration
Office of the Attorney General
State House Annex
Concord, NH 03301–6397

Contact: Paul Doran

Phone: (603) 271–1297

Fax: (603) 271–2110

New Jersey

Robert T. Winter
Director
Division of Criminal Justice
Department of Law and Public Safety
25 Market Street
CN 085
Trenton, NJ 08625–0085

Contact: Dennis O'Hara

Phone: (609) 984–6500

Fax: (609) 984–4496

New Mexico

Richard C. deBaca
Secretary
Department of Public Safety
P.O. Box 1628
Santa Fe, NM 87504

Contact: Jim Wilson

Phone: (505) 827–9099

Fax: (505) 827–3434

New York

Richard H. Girgenti
Director
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
Executive Park Tower
Stuyvesant Plaza
Albany, NY 12203–3764

Contact: Gary Schreivogl

Phone: (518) 457–8462

Fax: (518) 457–1186

North Carolina

Bruce Marshburn
Director
Governor's Crime Commission
3824 Barrett Drive, Suite 100
Raleigh, NC 27609

Contact: Natalie Mittag

Phone: (919) 571–4736

Fax: (919) 571–4745

North Dakota

William Broer, Jr.
Director
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Attorney General's Office
3303 East Main
P.O. Box 1054
Bismarck, ND 58502

Contact: Joe Herslip

Phone: (701) 221–6180

Fax: (701) 221–6158

Ohio

Gary C. Mohr
Director
Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Services
400 East Town Street, Suite 120
Columbus, OH 43215

Contact: Georgia Allerding

Phone: (614) 466–7782

Fax: (614) 466–0308

Oklahoma

Bruce Walker
Executive Coordinator
District Attorneys Training and Coordination Council
2200 Classen Boulevard, Suite 1800
Oklahoma City, OK 73106–5811

Contact: Suzanne McClain

Phone: (405) 557–6707

Fax: (405) 524–0581

Oregon

Jane Edwards
Acting Administrator
Executive Department
Criminal Justice Services Division
155 Cottage Street NE.
Salem, OR 97310

Contact: Jane Edwards

Phone: (503) 378–4123

Fax: (503) 378–8666

Pennsylvania

James Thomas
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
P.O. Box 1167, Federal Square Station
Harrisburg, PA 17108–8559

Contact: Richard Reeser

Phone: (717) 787–2040

Fax: (717) 783–7713

Rhode Island

Suzette Gebhard
Executive Director
Governor's Justice Commission
222 Quaker Lane, Suite 100
Warwick, RI 02893

Contact: Bill Martin

Phone: (401) 277–2620

Fax: (401) 277–1294

South Carolina

Burke O. Fitzpatrick
Director
Division of Public Safety Programs
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Contact: Ernie Euler

Phone: (803) 734–0426

Fax: (803) 734–0486

South Dakota

Frank D. Brost
Executive Assistant
Office of the Governor
Attorney General's Task Force on Drugs
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Contact: Don Brekke

Phone: (605) 773–4687

Fax: (605) 773–6471

Tennessee

Bill Looney
Acting Administrator
Criminal Justice Administration
Department of Finance and Administration
302 John Sevier Building
500 Charlotte Avenue
Nashville, TN 37243–1600

Contact: Kurt Frederick

Phone: (615) 741–3784

Fax: (615) 741–4390

Texas

Doyne Bailey
Executive Director
Criminal Justice Division
P.O. Box 12428, Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

Contact: Jimmy Willborn

Phone: (512) 463–4959

Fax: (512) 463–1705

Utah

S. Camille Anthony
Executive Director
Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice
State Capitol Building, Room 101
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Contact: Laura Lewis

Phone: (801) 538–1031

Fax: (801) 538–1528

Vermont

James Walton, Jr.
Commissioner
Vermont Department of Public Safety
Waterbury State Complex
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676–0850

Contact: Capt. Donald Ravenna

Phone: (802) 244–8781

Fax: (802) 244–1106

Virginia

Lindsay Dorrier, Jr.
Director
Department of Criminal Justice Services
805 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Contact: Joe Marshall

Phone: (804) 786–1577

Fax: (804) 371–8981

Washington

Barbara Gooding
Director
Washington State Department of
Community Development
906 Columbia Street SW.
P.O. Box 48300
Olympia, WA 98504

Contact: Kay Boyd

Phone: (206) 586–0665

Fax: (206) 586–6868

West Virginia

James M. Albert
Manager
Office of Criminal Justice and Highway Safety
1204 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, WV 25301

Contact: Melissa Whittington

Phone: (304) 558–8814

Fax: (304) 558–0391

Wisconsin

Jerome Lacke
Executive Director
Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance
222 State Street, Second Floor
Madison, WI 53702

Contact: Raymond J. Luick

Phone: (608) 266–7185

Fax: (608) 266–6676

Wyoming

Thomas J. Pagel
Director
Division of Criminal Investigation
316 West 22nd Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Contact: Sandra Mays

Phone: (307) 777–7181

Fax: (307) 777–7252

District of Columbia

David Temple
Executive Director
Office of Grants Management and Development
717 14th Street NW., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005

Contact: Patty Dobbs

Phone: (202) 727–6537

Fax: (202) 727–1617

American Samoa

Malaetasi M. Togafau
Office of the Attorney General
American Samoa Government
P.O. Box 7
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799

Contact: Craig Keener

Phone: (9) (011) 684–633–4163

Fax: (9) (011) 684–633–1838

Guam

Peter P. Leon Guerrero
Director
Bureau of Planning
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 2950
Agana, GU 96910

Contact: Miki Leon Guerrero

Phone: (9) (011) 671–472–8931 (ext 405)

Fax: (9) (011) 671–477–1812

Northern Mariana Islands

Jack Ogumoro
Acting Executive Director
Criminal Justice Planning Agency
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Governor
Saipan, MP 96950

Contact: Jack Ogumoro

Phone: (9) (011) 670–322–9350

Fax: (9) (011) 670–322–6311

Puerto Rico

The Honorable Efraín Rivera-Pérez
Acting Attorney General
Department of Justice
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
P.O. Box 192
San Juan, PR 00902

Contact: Astrid Conde-Ramirez

Phone: (809) 725–0335

Fax: (809) 725–6144 (1st)
(809) 724–4770 (A.G.)

Virgin Islands

Gaylord Sprauve
Drug Policy Advisor
Virgin Islands Law Enforcement Planning Commission
116 and 164 Submarine Base
Estate Nisky #6 Southside Quarters
St. Thomas, VI 00802

Contact: Helene Smollett

Phone: (809) 774–6400

Fax: (809) 774–4057

APPENDIX 3
OBTAINING FILMS

Drugs and Youth: The Challenge
California Image
3034 Gold Canal Drive, Suite B
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
1–800–451–0303

Cost: $15

Rising to the Challenge
Parent's Music Resource Center
1500 Arlington Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 527–9466

Cost: $29

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Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Assistance

Washington, D.C. 20531

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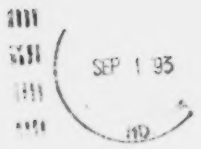

41172
GAIL MATHEWS
ERIC PROCESSING & REF FACILITY
SUITE 300 ACQ DEPT
1301 PICCARD DRIVE
ROCKVILLE MD 20850

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